

New law creates the Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Commission within the Dept. of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (CRT).

Provides that the 12 commission members are appointed as follows: three members appointed by the governor, subject to Senate confirmation; three members appointed by the lieutenant governor, subject to Senate confirmation; three members appointed by the president of the Senate; and, three members appointed by the speaker of the House. Provides that they shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority and that a vacancy shall be filled in the manner of the original appointment.

Provides for the selection of officers and allows the commission to employ staff as deemed necessary. Provides that members shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for actual expenses to the extent that funds are available for such purpose. Provides that no public funds can be expended by the commission unless specifically appropriated by the legislature. Requires that the commission hold its initial meeting not later than March 1, 2000, and meet at least semiannually thereafter. Authorizes special meetings upon the call of the chairman or of a quorum of the members. Requires at least seven days notice to members regarding time and place prior to any meeting. Provides that the commission shall be domiciled in Baton Rouge, but authorizes it to hold public meetings elsewhere in the state.

Provides that the commission shall:

- (1) Plan and develop activities appropriate to commemorate the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase, including a limited number of projects to be undertaken by the state seeking to harmonize and balance the important goals of ceremony and celebration with the equally important goals of scholarship and education.
- (2) Encourage private organizations and local governments to organize and participate in bicentennial activities.
- (3) Serve as a clearinghouse for collecting and disseminating information about bicentennial events and plans in the state.
- (4) Cooperate and coordinate with any similar commission created by the United States government or any other state.
- (5) Encourage state agencies to develop bicentennial programs.
- (6) Seek cooperation, advice, and assistance from both private and governmental agencies and organizations.
- (7) Adopt rules and regulations regarding the use of any logos, symbols, or marks originated under authority of and certified by the commission for use in connection with the state commemoration of the bicentennial, or any facsimile thereof.

New law authorizes the commission to solicit, accept, use, and dispose of any private or public funds in the form of donations of money, grants, property, or personal services from individuals, corporations, and governments for such purposes, all in accordance with existing law and new law. Provides that the office of management and finance of CRT may adopt any necessary rules or procedures for determining the value of donations to the commission.

Requires the commission, by April 1, 2000, to present the Joint Legislative

Committee on the Budget a master plan of its goals, objectives, and performance indicators for the duration of its existence, to include projected expenditures for its first two years.

Requires that the commission submit an annual report to the lieutenant governor, the president of the Senate, and the speaker of the House of Representatives until the commission terminates. Requires such submission no later than 30 days prior to the beginning of each regular session of the legislature. Requires that the first report include specific recommendations for commemorating and coordinating the bicentennial and related activities. Requires the cooperation of state agencies, officials, and subdivisions in carrying out the purposes of new law.

Places the commission in CRT pursuant to existing law which grants policymaking and rulemaking authority to the commission but which grants CRT certain personnel and fiscal and budgetary authority.

Provides that the commission shall terminate on Dec. 31, 2003.

Effective August 15, 1999.

(Amends R.S. 36:802(intro. para.); Adds R.S. 25:1231-1237 and R.S. 36:209(Q))